

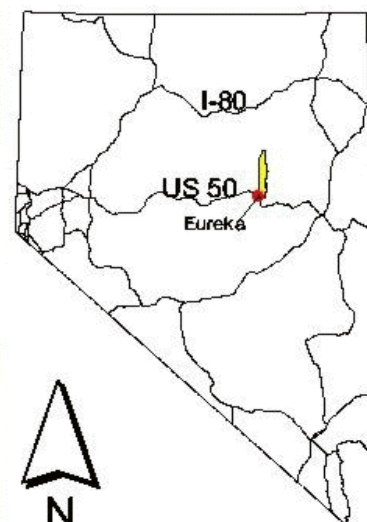
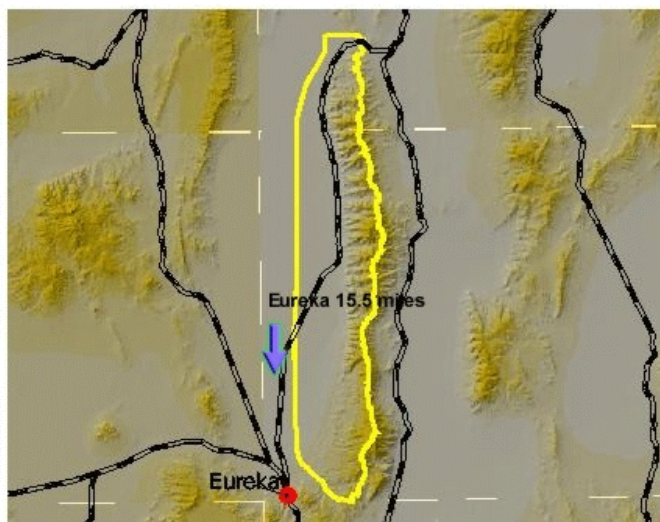


Diamond Hills Complex Herd Management Areas Eureka, White Pine and Elko Counties, Nevada



Location/Habitat

The Diamond Mountain Range is located east and north of the town of Eureka, Nevada, in Eureka, White Pine and Elko counties. The Diamond, Diamond Hills South and Diamond Hills North Herd Management Areas (HMAs) are all part of the Diamond Mountain Range. The Battle Mountain Field Office administers the Diamond HMA on the west face of the mountains in Eureka County. The area consists of 164,739 acres. The terrain across most of the former Shoshone-Eureka planning area managed by the Battle Mountain Field Office is typical of the Great Basin region with steep north and south trending mountain ranges separated by large sweeping valley bottoms. The Diamond Mountain Range is approximately 60 miles long and averages 6 to 9 miles wide. It is very steep, and dissected by numerous, narrow canyons. Newark Valley lies east of the mountain range and Diamond Valley is to the west at 5,700 feet in elevation. The Diamond Mountain Range is the highest mountain range in the old Shoshone-Eureka planning area and wild horses can be found near Diamond Peak at an elevation of 10,660 feet. During periods of heavy snowfall, wild horses will move off the mountain into the valleys. As a matter of interest, the northern end of Diamond Valley consists of a large alkali (salt) flat which is common in many valley bottoms in Nevada. Temperatures range in excess of 100 degrees Fahrenheit in the summer to less than 20 degrees below zero in the winter. Precipitation is in short supply with an annual total of only 5 to 16 inches.



The mountain range spans over the boundaries of three counties and three separate BLM planning areas, and consists of three HMAs. The horses move freely between the HMAs, without physical barriers between administrative boundaries. Therefore, the mountain range is being approached as a complex and is being managed in a joint effort by three BLM field offices: Ely, Elko and Battle Mountain. In addition to wild horses, the HMA is often utilized by domestic cattle and domestic sheep. Wildlife species occurring in the area include mule deer, sage grouse, chukar, coyotes, mountain lions, bobcats, pronghorn antelope and numerous other small mammals, birds, and reptiles.

Vegetation

Vegetation types are distributed according to topography and elevation and the associated precipitation. Within the highest elevations, and subsequently the greatest precipitation, the vegetation consists primarily of pinyon pine and juniper trees, mountain mahogany and low sagebrush. The mountain range supports important browse species for deer such as bitterbrush, serviceberry and snowberry. The lower and drier elevations consist of saltbush, greasewood, sagebrush and a variety of annual and perennial grasses and wildflowers. Important species include needle-and-thread, bluegrass, Indian ricegrass, bottlebrush, squirreltail, scarlet globemallow, phlox, lupine, and many species of aster. Cheat grass, an annual invasive weed, has invaded much of the low elevation rangeland. Many of the soils within the area are affected by salt, and therefore, are relatively low in forage productivity. In some areas it can take 25 acres to support one horse for one month.

Herd Description

The animals previously captured in the Diamond Hills Complex HMAs varied in color and confirmation. Although most of the animals were bay and sorrel, some paint, buckskin, grulla (mouse color), dun, blue roan, palomino and Appaloosa horses also were captured.